

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* March 2026 NEWS



Jump River Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

Since 1938

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

**FROM POWER LINES
TO FIREWALLS:**

**THE RURAL
REALITY OF
CYBER THREATS**

**HOW ENERGY EFFICIENCY
REBATES AND INCENTIVES WORK**

AFFORDABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

PEANUT BUTTER RECIPES





PERFECT STORM RESULTS IN PCA CHARGES

Why Your Demand Matters

By Kurt Harris, General Manager/CEO

Across the U.S., the demand for power is climbing at one of the fastest rates in decades. Homes and businesses are using more electricity than ever, and that trend is expected to continue. Combine rising demand with Winter Storm Fern, that unleashed heavy snow and extreme cold weather across most of the Midwest and East Coast at the end of January, along with an unplanned maintenance outage on a generation resource for our wholesale power provider, and you have what many would call the “perfect storm.”

Supply and Demand

In our region, below-normal temperatures, unplanned power plant outages, and low wind generation strained grid reliability for the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). Reduced power supply drove up energy and natural gas prices as more expensive generation units were called upon by MISO to meet the region’s electricity demands. On January 24, MISO issued a rare “Max Gen” event, signaling an increased risk of not being able to provide enough power to meet consumer demand.

At the same time, our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC), was unable to use one of its primary baseload power plants due to an unplanned maintenance outage. As a result, Dairyland had to purchase power from the regional market at prices significantly higher than budgeted. Because of these January events, our actual wholesale power costs were considerably higher than forecasted, triggering one of the highest Power Cost Adjustments (PCA) we’ve been charged by DPC. Wholesale power costs account for roughly 50 percent of the cooperative’s overall expenses.

How Will This Impact Your Bill

This is not the way we anticipated starting 2026. Our commitment remains to provide safe, reliable power 24/7/365. Since the end of January, we have been working closely with Dairyland to identify sustainable ways to address increased power costs and mitigate the impact of Winter Storm Fern on you, our members.

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, retail electricity rates are set to absorb some price fluctuations and storm-related costs whenever possible. However, when wholesale power increases cannot be absorbed, a PCA charge allows the cooperative to recover those costs without permanently increasing the monthly base electricity rates.

To minimize the impact on our members, JREC will recover this expense through a PCA as follows:

- Costs will be spread over four months rather than a single billing cycle.
- Because January is typically the highest-usage month, we delayed implementing a PCA charge until February (bills mailed in March).

These events are a reminder that power costs are volatile and subject to weather and market conditions. Dairyland remains committed to a diversified resource portfolio and enhanced

transmission infrastructure to help mitigate future unforeseen financial impacts.

Why Lowering Demand Matters

Jump River Electric is billed by Dairyland not only for the energy members use, but also for demand created during peak hours throughout the year. When members shift non-essential energy use outside peak periods, overall system demand can be reduced — potentially lowering wholesale power costs, which benefits all members.

During the extremely cold weather we experienced these past months, members have been asked on multiple occasions to conserve or shift energy during peak alert events. These coordinated efforts really do contribute to grid stability and can limit future cost increases. Thank you for doing your part during critical times.

We remain committed to keeping rates as stable as possible by offering energy-saving programs and conservation rebates, providing reduced kilowatt-hour rates through load management programs, securing stable-priced energy when available, and maintaining a strong, reliable electric system for the future.

We understand that unexpected cost adjustments can be frustrating, and we appreciate your continued partnership in managing energy use during peak times. If you have questions about PCAs or your bill, visit jrec.com/rates or contact our office. To learn more about regional grid operations and MISO, visit www.misoenergy.org.



POWER COST ADJUSTMENT EXPLAINED

As a not-for-profit electric co-op, retail rates help absorb some wholesale power cost fluctuations. When costs rise too high, a PCA charge recovers expenses without permanently increasing rates.

- 1 The cost to generate or buy electricity fluctuates.** This is due to changing fuel costs, weather, equipment outages, and the demand for electricity.
- 2 Adjustments are made to reflect the true cost of power each month.** Base rates are collected from members each month, representing our projected revenue requirements. A Power Cost Adjustment accommodates monthly fluctuations in power costs.
- 3 Members' bills show the adjustment up or down.** This adjustment is made on the member's bill to reflect any changes for that month. This can be a charge some months and a credit other months.

NO CONTEST, NO BALLOT: WHEN A BALLOT MAY NOT BE REQUIRED

Jump River Electric Cooperative is committed to democratic member control and transparent governance. One way members democratically participate is through director elections and voting on bylaw amendments or resolutions.

A bylaw amendment adopted last year established specific circumstances under which a formal ballot may not be required. This change reflects the cooperative's effort to reduce costs while maintaining member participation and election fairness and integrity.

What Changed Article IV, Section 5 of the Bylaws now allows uncontested director elections to be conducted at the Annual Meeting by unanimous consent, voice vote, or similar means, at the discretion of the Board. In simple terms, when there is no competition for any of the three directors' seats and no other items requiring a vote, a formal ballot is not necessary.

Why This Change Was Made This amendment was not intended to reduce member involvement or the importance of democratic control. Rather, it reflects a practical and cost-conscious approach to governance. When no race exists, conducting a full ballot election can result in significant costs related to mail-in or electronic ballot processing, and administrative time.

By allowing uncontested elections to be finalized through simpler means, the cooperative can save money while still maintaining a fair and transparent process.

Looking Ahead At the time this article is being written, it is too early to know whether there will be a need for a mail-in or electronic ballot. However, if a director race becomes contested, or if a proposed resolution is brought forward, a ballot will be required.

If a Ballot Is Required Should voting by ballot be necessary, members are encouraged to refer to the voting timeline graphic at the bottom of this page, which outlines important dates and steps in the election and voting process.

SAVE THE DATE

88TH ANNUAL MEETING

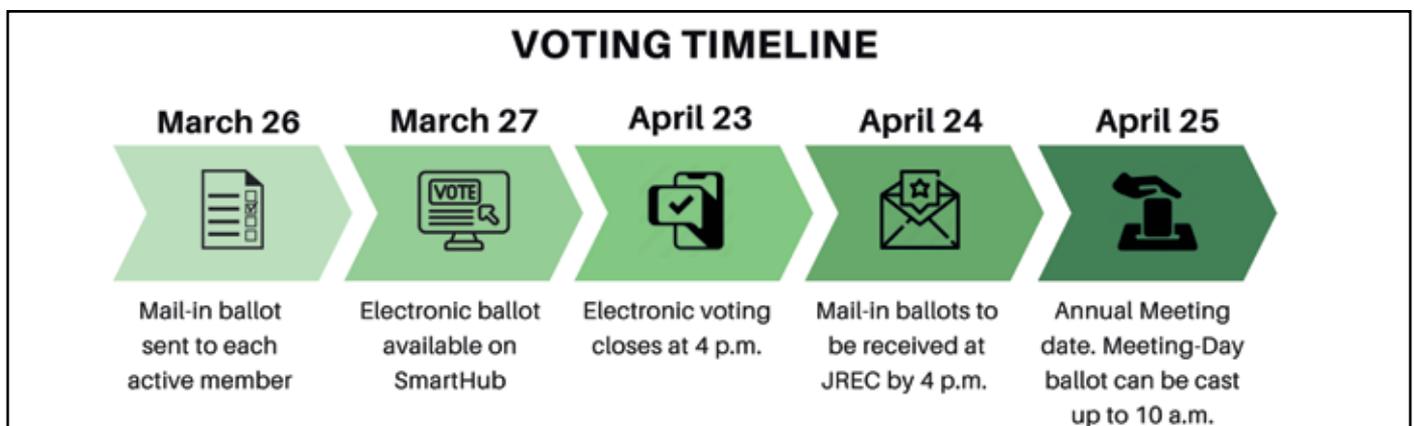
**APRIL 25 | LADYSMITH
AT 10 AM* | WAREHOUSE**

**LIVESTREAMED TO THE
HAYWARD BRANCH OFFICE**

***Registration begins at 9:30 AM**

Participating in this decision-making process is essential, as your voice helps guide the future of the cooperative. As always, we appreciate your trust in Jump River Electric Cooperative. Our goal is to uphold cooperative values while operating efficiently and responsibly on behalf of our membership.

If you have questions about the election process, please don't hesitate to contact the office.





Willie's PowerUP Pick

Living in rural areas shouldn't mean settling for slow or unreliable internet. That's why Willie's PowerUp Pick of the month is Viasat Internet—a fast, reliable, and flexible internet option.



Viasat is a valuable member advantage—helping members stay connected for everyday online needs like browsing, email, online learning, video calls, and streaming music or shows. With three available packages, members can choose a plan that fits their household's online habits—without paying for more than they need.

Whether you're working from home, managing a farm or home business, helping kids with homework, or simply staying connected with family and friends, Viasat helps bridge the digital gap for rural communities.

Don't live here full time, don't worry. Viasat has a flexible seasonal option you can explore. You can find more information online at jrec.com/viasat or call our office.

Fast. Reliable. Flexible.

Packages starting as low as \$69.99/month. Taxes apply. Unlimited Plans and a Seasonal Option Available.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION #3:

EXERCISE MORE AND GET FIT!

If your New Year's resolution to get moving has started to subside (or has come to a complete stop), it's not too late to get back on track—with a little help from Viasat Internet.

Viasat is built for rural living, delivering reliable high-speed internet where cable and fiber don't reach—so you can stream, work, learn, and connect with confidence. If one of your New Year's resolutions is to exercise more or get fit, Viasat helps make it happen with the ability to stream online workout classes, fitness apps, and training programs right from home. From wide-open country roads to off-the-map locations, Viasat keeps you online—and moving—no matter where you call home.

LEAD WITH PURPOSE. DREAM BIG. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

If you're a high school student who's interested in fine-tuning your leadership skills, making an impact in your community, or discovering what college life is really like, then you won't want to miss attending the Youth Leadership Conference (YLC).



Held July 14–16 at UW–Stout, this high-energy conference brings together students from across Wisconsin for three unforgettable days designed by teens, for teens. YLC is all about discovering your potential, building confidence, and learning how cooperatives empower local communities—all while having a lot of fun along the way.

Participants dive into hands-on leadership activities, interactive workshops, and team challenges that help sharpen communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills. You'll also get a taste of college life at UW–Stout, explore campus, and connect with students who share your interests. Many attendees say the friendships they make at YLC last long after the conference ends.

Even better, Jump River Electric Cooperative is looking to sponsor local high school sophomores and juniors to attend this event—and all expenses are paid. That means no cost to you, just an incredible opportunity. You can also earn up to \$1,000 in scholarships.

From leadership growth and college exploration to travel opportunities and lifelong friendships, YLC is more than a conference—it's a launchpad for your future. If you're ready to step up, stand out, and lead with purpose, this is your moment. Contact your high school guidance counselor for more information.

RJ EARNS JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN STATUS



After four years of dedicated on-the-job training and schooling, RJ (right) has completed the apprenticeship program, officially becoming the newest Journeyman Lineman at JREC. Operations Manager Ben Modl is pictured with RJ following the January graduation ceremonies. RJ's commitment to the cooperative, our members, and the communities we serve is truly commendable. Please join us in congratulating RJ on this achievement!

SPRING READINESS FOR HOME, FARM & COMMUNITY

Willie Wiredhand reminds us:

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, our homes, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. However, the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard.

As you plan your tree and landscape plantings, consider that trees and shrubs need space to grow both above and below ground. Reduce fire hazards, power outages, and the need for frequent pruning with proper selection and planting of trees near utilities. You can find more on how to plant the right tree in the

right place at jrec.com/row-maintenance.

Remember to also call Diggers Hotline (dial 811) at least 72 hours before you begin any digging project.



Plant the right tree in the right place.
Don't plant trees under power lines.
Call 811 before you dig.



Control your controlled burn

It's called a controlled burn for a reason. If you don't plan your controlled burn in advance and keep it under check, it can quickly spread too far and wide. If you are considering implementing a controlled burn (also known as a prescribed fire) to address vegetation or weed management, follow several precautions to stay safe:



1. Plan your burn before you begin.
2. Certain groups should be notified: check with your town or village office; notify your local fire department; let your neighbors know your plans.
3. Obtain all necessary permits.
4. Check the forecast for weather conditions, such as wind direction and speed, as well as humidity (as a general rule, relative humidity should be 40 percent or higher).
5. If there are power poles in the planned burning area, clear all vegetation and weeds at least four feet around the base of the pole.
6. Wet the base of the pole with water before beginning your burn.

If your fire gets out of control, gets too close to a power pole, or if the pole catches fire, call 9-1-1 and Jump River Electric Co-op. Once a fire breaks out, NEVER spray water near the pole, power lines, or any other utility equipment. Electricity and water do not mix, and you could cause a short circuit that could cause serious injury or death.

Fire damage to a power pole is usually evident by blackening and scorch marks, but even slight discoloration can cause serious problems. Sometimes the poles burn from the inside out, and the damage is not immediately apparent.

Take the time to plan ahead, or your controlled burn could get expensive. The person who causes damage to a utility pole is responsible for the fees associated with replacing it.

There are many other safety considerations; check with local authorities and fully research all aspects of a controlled burn before implementing one.

Together We Grow

FARM SAFETY TIPS

When working near power lines, always have a spotter on the ground who can direct you away from power lines or poles.



AG WEEK
MARCH 15 - 21

Be sure to keep a proper distance—at least 10 feet clearance on all sides—from power lines at all times. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, when broken can become charged with electricity.

ANNUAL RUSK COUNTY SPRING EXPO

March 28, 2026

9 a.m.–2 p.m. – Ladysmith High School

All area residents are invited. Come in and view the displays and meet your local dealers and industry representatives. Stop by the JREC booth and discover the many member advantages and services offered by your cooperative, including Viasat Internet. Be sure to register for the prize drawing while there.



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After-hour emergency service, call 866-273-5111

Pay by Phone: 844-967-2320

Find us on Facebook, X, and Instagram   

Denise Zimmer, Editor



Scan the QR code to find us on Facebook (left) and Instagram (right).



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

JREC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.